

Starting a New Business?



Alameda Countywide
Clean Water Program
A Consortium of Local Agencies

As a new business, it is important to consider the potential impact of your activities on local creeks and San Francisco Bay. Pollutants discharged to local creeks, lakes, and San Francisco Bay during storms or through illegal dumping significantly contribute to water pollution, and harm aquatic life. In response to Federal and State regulations and requirements, municipalities in Alameda County have joined to form the Alameda Countywide Clean Water Program (ACCWP). In addition to reviewing their own practices, municipalities in Alameda County have launched a public education campaign and inspection program. Inspectors work with new and existing businesses to identify and control potential discharge of pollutants to the storm drain system.

All businesses can implement common-sense Best Management Practices (BMPs) to reduce or eliminate their contribution to stormwater pollution. Most BMPs involve modest changes to routine operations and maintenance practices *Implementing BMPs can save you time and money by preventing potential violations.* The information on the reverse side of this page identifies some activities which contribute to stormwater runoff pollution as well as appropriate BMPs to control or eliminate these discharges.

A particular concern for new businesses is that all drains be properly plumbed. In general, only rain is allowed in the storm drains. If possible, proper disposal of wastewater should be considered before buying or leasing a site, to avoid expensive re-plumbing. Most wastewaters must discharge to the sanitary sewer system. If you don't know where a drain discharges, contact your local building department or wastewater treatment agency staff for help. Your local stormwater program representative and wastewater treatment agency can help you determine where the drain should discharge. They can also help you find out how to redirect the discharge if it needs to be changed.

For more information, call your City of Alameda stormwater runoff representative at **510-749-5840** or the ACCWP at **1-510-670-5543**. You can contact your local wastewater treatment agency, EBMUD, at 510-287-1607.

Best Management Practices

You can control pollutant discharges to the storm drain by implementing common sense housekeeping measures also called Best Management Practices (BMPs). The objectives are to 1) keep pollutants from contacting rain, and 2) keep pollutants from being dumped or poured into the storm drains. The goal is only rain in the storm drain.

Will your business store any raw materials? Generate waste materials or wastewater? Use or maintain vehicles? Use or maintain equipment outside? Transfer any liquids to containers transported to or from your site? Carry out any remodeling activities to your site? Or do any washing activity outdoors? If the answer to any one of these questions is yes, you need to consider the first group of BMPs listed below. You will also need to consider the second group of BMPs during normal business activities when your business is operational.

BEFORE YOU LEASE OR BUY, consider the following:

- ✓ Is a sanitary hookup readily available? Will an onsite treatment system be required by the local wastewater treatment agency prior to discharge to the sanitary sewer?
- ✓ If equipment or vehicles need to be cleaned, is a washpad or enclosed area that is plumbed to the sanitary sewer available?
- ✓ Is there sufficient room inside buildings for storage of raw materials, waste materials, equipment or parts? Are other methods readily available for protecting from rain materials that must be kept outdoors?
- ✓ Are the material transfer areas (for example, loading docks, receiving areas, etc.) covered or protecting from rain? Will you need to protect storm drains in these areas in case of a spill?

DURING NORMAL BUSINESS ACTIVITIES, implement the following BMPs:

- ✓ Store all materials under cover protected from rain, runoff, and wind.
- ✓ Keep all storage containers free from cracks and leaks.
- ✓ Keep all work areas clean and free from debris.
- ✓ Establish a Spill Clean Up Plan for liquid and solid materials; use dry cleaning methods rather than pressure washing materials to the storm drains.
- ✓ Handle all materials carefully to avoid spills.
- ✓ All wastewater from manufacturing, cleaning, and washing must be either contained and recycled or disposed to the sanitary sewer. The wastewater may have to be treated to remove pollutants prior to discharge to the sanitary sewer. Contact your local wastewater treatment agency for their requirements.
- ✓ Wash equipment/vehicles in a designated and/or covered area where wash water is collected for recycling or for discharging to the sanitary sewer. Contact your local wastewater treatment agency.
- ✓ Dispose of all wastes properly. Recycle whenever possible.

*Hazardous Materials must comply with the hazardous materials storage and disposal requirements.